

1 March 1955

SHIFT OF SOVIET MILITARY ATTACHES

- I. During past five weeks at least four ranking Soviet MA's have returned to USSR after relatively short tours of duty (all less than 18 months).
 - A. In addition to the MA's for Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria, two others--from Albania and Poland--have probably returned to Moscow, and the Soviet MA in Peiping was not at his post on Army Day (23 Feb).
 - B. Three of seven have made formal departures, have not yet been replaced.
 - C. Even if others only temporarily absent, near-simultaneous recall could be indication of major military consultations in Moscow affecting Satellites.
 - D. Several departures came just before Soviet Army Day, when ranking Soviet MA is traditional host and absence was sure to be noted by diplomatic community.
 1. Conspicuous nature of recall could be part of Soviet effort to impress West with imminence of countermeasures against West German rearmament.
- II. Attaches involved were wartime field commanders with distinguished combat records.
 - A. Their arrival at Satellite capitals in late '53 was considered indication of Soviet emphasis on improving Satellite training and proficiency.

- B. Experience gathered in Satellites assignments would make them useful members of combined planning or operational staffs (probably under "big-name" Soviet marshal).

III. Creation of such a new combined Soviet-Satellite defense structure (forecast at Moscow Security Conference on 2 December) may actually be under way now.

- A. Such a plan was spelled out publicly by Molotov on 8 February, when he said mutual defense pact already being negotiated and referred to necessity of creating a "unified military command" for USSR and East Europe.
- B. Visits to Moscow by some Satellite military leaders in recent weeks were previous evidence of important consultations.
- C. Chinese involvement suggested not only by MA's absence from post, but by recent Soviet acknowledgement of pledged Chinese support for Security Conference decisions.